

C. CIA Recruiting on Campus

We understand that, broadly speaking, the CIA uses two methods for systematic recruiting on university campuses. The first method involves sending an identifiable CIA recruiter to interview students and others who may be interested in becoming employees of the CIA. This method is open and visible and comparable to the recruiting efforts of other public and private organizations. We think it poses no issue of principle for the academic community.

The second method involves the use of individuals who may be professors, administrators or possible students and who have an ongoing confidential relationship with the CIA as recruiters. The job of these covert recruiters is to identify for the CIA members of the community, including foreign students, who may be likely candidates for an employment or other relationship with the CIA on a regular or sporadic basis. Although we are not certain how the recruiting process works, we understand that when the recruiter believes that a likely candidate has been identified, the name of the candidate is reported to the CIA, which then conducts a background check on the individual and creates a file with the information it obtains. Neither the recruiter nor the CIA informs the individual at this stage that he or she is being considered for employment or other purposes by the CIA. If the investigation confirms the view of the recruiter, the individual is then approached to discuss a present or future relationship with the CIA.

For a number of reasons we believe that members of the Harvard community should not serve as covert recruiters for the CIA. First and most importantly, it is inappropriate for members of the academic community to be acting secretly on behalf of the government in his relationship with other members of the academic community. The existence on the Harvard campus of unidentified individuals who may be probing the views of others and obtaining information for the possible use of the CIA is inconsistent with the idea of a free and independent university. Such practices inhibit free discourse and are a distortion of the relationship that should exist among members of an academic community, and in particular of the relationship that should exist between faculty members and students.

There are other reasons for members of the Harvard community not to be involved in such a covert recruiting system if our understanding of it is correct. Foreign students pose a special problem. It is not unreasonable to suppose that recruitment of a foreign national by the CIA may lead to requests that the person engage in acts that violate the laws of his own country. We do not consider it appropriate for a member of the Harvard community—especially a faculty member who may have a teaching relationship with the foreign national—to be part of a process that may reasonably be supposed to lead to a request to an individual to violate the laws of another country. More generally, we question whether it is appropriate for a member of the Harvard community to trigger a secret background investigation of another member of the community. Such an investigation is an invasion of individual privacy, whether the subject of the investigation be a United States citizen or a foreign national. Moreover, the conduct of a secret investigation is likely to lead to additional secret governmental intrusion into the campus as the CIA tries to develop more information about the subject of the investigation. Finally, it is impossible to know to what uses the information may be put in future years and in what ways the life of the subject of the investigation may be adversely affected.

For these reasons we conclude that any member of the Harvard community who has an ongoing relationship with the CIA as a recruiter, with or without compensation, should make his or her role known to the Dean of the appropriate Faculty who in turn should inform the President of the University and the appropriate placement offices within the University. At the placement offices the names of recruiters would be available to all members of the Harvard community. Because of the CIA's authority to conduct secret background investigation, no recruiter at Harvard should suggest a name of a member of the Harvard community to the CIA as a potential employee or for other purposes without the consent of the individual.

We recognize that there are other possible CIA "recruiting" situations that do not involve an ongoing relationship between the CIA and the individual whose advice is being sought. For example, when a new President of the United States is elected, a faculty member might be asked to recommend candidates for top staff positions in the CIA. Or a faculty member who has had a consulting relationship with the CIA may be asked to recommend a colleague to undertake some specialized research for the CIA. Or a faculty member who has had a consulting relationship with the CIA may be asked to recommend a colleague to undertake some specialized research for the CIA. Occasional acts of recommendation such as these would ordinarily pose no special problems. Even here, however, an individual should exercise discretion to make certain that he or she is not causing difficulty or embarrassment for another member of the Harvard community. Depending on the circumstances, it may be appropriate to request consent from an individual before presenting his or her name to the CIA. Because of the special situation of foreign nationals, consent should be obtained before recommending a foreigner to the CIA.

Recommendation: Any member of the Harvard community who has an ongoing relationship with the CIA as a recruiter should report that fact in writing to the Dean of the appropriate Faculty, who should inform the President of the University and the appropriate placement offices within the University. A recruiter should not give the CIA the name of another member of the Harvard community without the prior consent of that individual. Members of the Harvard community whose advice is sought on a one-time or occasional basis should consider carefully whether under the circumstances it is appropriate to give the CIA a name without the prior consent of the individual.

D. Operational Use of Members of the Academic Community

According to the Select Committee, the CIA has used academics for a variety of operational purposes. (pp. 189-91) For security reasons the Select Committee's report does not state with any precision what these purposes have been, although it does indicate that they have included writing books and other materials for propaganda purposes, the collection of intelligence, and making introductions for intelligence purposes. It appears from the report that most of these relationships have been covert but at some universities at least one university official is aware of the operational use of the academics on the campus. The report does not state precisely what is involved in these "operational uses" or whether any of them take place on the campus. It is indicated that the "CIA considers these operational relationships with the United States academic community as perhaps its most sensitive domestic area and has strict controls governing these operations." (p. 190) These controls prohibit the use of academics who are working abroad under the Fulbright-Hays Act. (p. 190)

It is understandable that the operational use of academics should be considered a sensitive area because it poses several serious problems. Covert intelligence activities within the walls of a university are clearly an unacceptable intrusion into the academic community. When the CIA uses an academic when he is abroad to collect intelligence or make intelligence introductions, the CIA is using with the consent of the academic the academic's ability to travel and meet with people in furtherance of his academic work. Put most simply, the academic enterprise provides a "cover" for intelligence work. This use of the academic enterprise should not, in our opinion, continue. It inevitably casts doubt on the integrity of the efforts of the many American academics who work abroad and, as a practical matter, may make it more difficult for American academics to obtain permission to pursue their interests in foreign countries. Speaking more broadly, we believe that the use of the academic profession and scholarly enterprises to provide a "cover" for intelligence activities is likely to corrupt the academic process and lead to a loss of public respect for the academic enterprises.

We would conclude, therefore, that members of the Harvard community should not undertake intelligence operations for the CIA. They should not, for example, when travelling abroad agree to perform any introductions for the CIA or attempt to obtain any information for the CIA.

This stricture does not mean that after returning to the United States academics should refuse to discuss their travels with the CIA, if they so desire. As stated by the Select Committee, occasional debriefings, which are analogous to the consulting arrangements discussed above do not pose a "danger to the integrity of American private institutions." (p. 189) Occasional debriefings do not involve an academic's taking actions or making observations as a result of instructions in advance from the CIA. However, debriefings of an individual on a regular or systematic basis can lead to implicit understandings between the CIA and the individual on the gathering of intelligence.

The involvement of academics in writing books and other materials for propaganda is a more difficult question to assess, because the Select Committee for security reasons provides no specific examples and because there is a wide range of possible propaganda activities. We hope that members of the Harvard community would not, as a matter of personal principle, become participants in activities that are known to involve partial truths or distortions. We would suggest a complete prohibition where the academic is publicly lending his name and position to material that he knows to be misleading or untrue, such as writing a signed introduction to a fabricated diary of a defector or writing for publication a review of such a diary. In such cases the academic is using the public respect for the academic profession to gain acceptance for material that is not true, an act which seems to us inconsistent with the scholarly and professional obligations of an academic.

Recommendation: Members of the Harvard community should not undertake intelligence operations for the CIA. They should not participate in propaganda activities if the activities involve lending their names and positions to gain public acceptance for materials they know to be misleading or untrue. Before undertaking any other propaganda activities, an individual should consider whether the task is consistent with his scholarly and professional obligations.